1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

776 and yet their priests give him twenty names, in their songs. These names, so far as I could ascertain, all refer to his qualities. One Bri-bri, whom I had with me as a servant for over half a year, and from whom I obtained much valuable information, particularly in regard to the language, said to me, "Why do you foreigners ask us how many Gods there are? There is only one, and that is *Si-bu'*."

The Devil, or devils, are minor personages, who receive no worship of any kind. They are called, *Bi*, by the Bri-bris and Cabecars, *As* in Tiribi, *Ash* in Terraba, and *Ku-gro'* in Boruca. The devil is generally malevolent, but does not seem to be specially feared. *Bi* among the Bribris is a term also used for a variety of lesser devils, or evil spirits who have special missions, like making people sick, &c. Some of these in-
776 habit the less frequented parts of the forests and mountains, and are
778 very jealous of their domains. People entering an unfrequented region, make as little noise as possible. If they make the local *Bi* angry with their noise, he will revenge himself by a shower or by causing somebody to fall and hurt himself, or to be bitten by a snake, &c. A person who
[753] has once been in these places can return with less risk, but all new-comers must keep at least a comparative silence. Another class of beings inhabit the rocks on the summits of certain mountain peaks. They live *inside* the rocks, not among them, consequently their habitations are undistinguishable to mortal eyes. They seem to have the same habits as ordinary humans. One of these peaks, a mile or two across a cañon, in front of a place called Sar-we, is thus inhabited according to the accounts of the people of Sar-we. They told me of hearing singing, the beating of drums, &c., coming from that direction. The configuration of the hills is such that a glance showed me, that a drum beaten at certain of the houses in the cañon of Urun, would echo back from this hill to Sar-we and thus account for the sounds. These people of the *U-jums*, as the naked peaks are called, are said to be the owners of the tapirs which roam through these solitudes. They are very jealous of their domains and cause, by some occult means, the death of any one who dares approach their homes. I could not induce an Indian to accompany us to the summit of Pico Blanco, partly on account of *bu-ku-ru'*, and perhaps more still for fear of the people of the *U-jum* or peak. In addition to
776 these beliefs, they also believe in the efficacy of incantation by their *Asos* or doctors, of whom more immediately; and further in certain ceremonies or observances of their own. I have seen a woman carefully collect a bunch of some weed and taking it to the river wash her face, neck,
[216] breast, and arms with it. This was to bring good luck to the men who were at the time at work turning a stream to dry its bed, for the purpose of catching fish. She had her reward; hundreds of fish of 2 to 4 pounds weight were captured, and of a quality as fine as shad.

324 There is a peculiar wood, of which I shall have occasion to speak
[293] further on, used only for walking sticks for the chiefs and more eminent
181 persons. The growing tree is unknown and it is only obtained by the

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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axes, machetes, cotton cloth, &c. They never travel alone; always two or more going in company. This is a very prudent measure, since accidents are liable to happen, like snake-bites, or a bad fall, and a person alone and disabled in these wilds, would be more than apt to die before he would be discovered. The preparations for a trip into the forest are simple, but require time. If there are no plantains to be found in the neighborhood to which they are going, a large supply is collected. They are skinned, boiled, and dried hard in the smoke of a slow fire. This is to diminish the weight. A sufficient supply of corn is ground and made into a paste, either with or without the admixture of ripe plantain, for chicha. This is done up in bundles of about a gallon and a half in bulk, carefully wrapped in large leaves and tied with strips, torn from the foot-stalk of the plantain leaf. At last, all being ready, every person loaded with all he or she can carry, they start out, the loads done up in as compact a bulk as possible and carried on the back, suspended from the forehead by a strip of *mastate*, or bark cloth. Each person also carries in the hand a staff, four or five feet long, made of some tough wood. For ordinary purposes, the entire trunk of certain slender palm trees is used. This makes a stick about as thick as an ordinary civilized walking stick, but very strong, and sufficiently elastic to yield a little without breaking. The chiefs and a few other persons of consequence, like the priests, usually carry a stick of the red wood described above. This is neither so strong nor so light as the palm stick, but it is a privilege of rank, and is preferred in consequence. If the party is going on a trading trip—while the stronger members carry the load of sarsaparilla or rubber, still there are always some, either women or boys, who carry the inevitable bundles of chicha paste. Even when going from one house to another visiting, or to a dance, the chicha is not forgotten, unless the distance is so short that they are not liable to become thirsty on the road. On arriving at a house, the party enters without a word, and each person seats himself where most convenient, but as near the door as possible. The owner of the house, or in his absence, his wife or the next most responsible person approaches the new arrivals and salutes with, "You have come;" "I have come;" "Are you well?" "I am well, how are you?" "I am well." If a particular friend, or a person of consequence, he is invited to seat himself in a hammock. The people of less importance are allowed to take care of themselves. In a few minutes the women of the house approach with calabashes or vessels made of folded leaves full of chicha. If chocolate is to be had, it is prepared at once, and offered in place of chicha. This is a delicate attention, only shown to friends or persons of consideration. Common folks must be content with chicha. Whether chocolate or chica, it is served at least three times, at very short intervals, and at last, when you cannot swallow any more, the polite thing is to say to the person offering it, "drink it yourself," an advice usually followed, and which stops the supply. If the people are particularly inclined to be hospitable, and are fortunate enough to be well supplied, it is not uncommon for the

484 [251] [482] [481] [554] 574 [431]

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

784 natives will admit. This penalty may be avoided, however, by calling in the services of the nearest shaman, who removes the taboo, or *búkuru*, by blowing upon the object and singing certain songs to the accompaniment of his medicine rattle. The following day it may be handled and disposed of with impunity.

226 *Fish Traps.*—Fish are taken by blocking small tributaries of a river and stranding them, by shooting with arrows or catching them in traps. Unfortunately none of these processes was observed, but pl. XXIX reproduces a photograph of a tributary of Coen river across which a temporary dam had been made to divert the course of the stream and leave the fish high and dry.

481 At this point we may mention the Bribri method of crossing swollen streams by means of the ingenious device of weighting themselves with heavy stones borne on the shoulders (pl. XXX). The writer did not have the good fortune to witness this performance, but we are enabled to introduce the accompanying illustration through the

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

courtesy of Professor Saville, from whose collection of prints it came. 481 ●

Food.—Plantains are extensively used, and, eaten boiled, seem to form the staple diet of the Bribri. Bananas are also extensively eaten. According to Gabb,[19] the Indians roast green plantains as a substitute for bread, but when ripe they are roasted and eaten with chocolate, in order to sweeten the latter. They are also boiled green to eat with meat or corn. Ripe plantains are boiled, mashed, and mixed with equal quantities of corn-meal paste for cakes or chicha; sometimes this paste is diluted with water and made into a gruel. 262 252

Corn in a variety of colors is cultivated—red, white, blue, yellow, black, and purple. It is eaten when fresh, boiled in the ear; but it is generally dried, hulled, and ground to flour on a stone metate with a mano, or, as Gabb relates, on a flat slab from one of the buttresses of a ceiba tree, dressed smooth. The dry corn is soaked over night to soften it; it is then spread on the metate and crushed with the convex stone muller, which is rocked over it. The paste is then boiled,

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

137
481

PL. XXX

SKINNER—BRIBRI

BRIBRI METHOD OF CROSSING A STREAM

facing p. 99

291 quality as a man's belt. Occasionally, as late as a few years ago, this same *huipil* was used with a piece of cloth attached to the back as a collar. The skirt, which is relatively heavy, is worn wrapped around the body, the stripes placed horizontally (see fig. 7, *d*). It is sustained by a string tied around the waist. Under the skirt, loin cloths of *mastate* (see p. 18) are sometimes worn. No other sort of undergarment is used.

301 Today, most women wear two necklaces, usually of beads with seeds or coins interspersed. Earrings of seeds, a round red seed from the *poró* tree, or a similar seed that has a black spot and grows on a vine, are favorites, but cheap earrings from *ladino* stores are also seen. Before, however, in addition to seeds and fruits, sea shells and even pearls were used. Pink sea shells, such as the *Guaymi* wear today, were particularly coveted. Animal pelts and bird's egg shells served as necklaces. Rings were and are made from the seeds of the coyol palm and a palm called *palmilera*. The women love combs and flowers in their [439] hair, seldom appearing with less than two combs and, as a rule, three or four, all of bright colors and bought from the Chinamen on the coast or in Buenos Aires. Barrettes also are frequently placed between the combs and the flowers. The hair is always arranged in two 302 braids and parted in the center. Often ribbon is braided in these plaits. Until recently, instead of ribbons in the braids, cotton thread dyed purple was used. It is said that no other color answered the purpose. The two braids were tied with this thread on top of the hair in the front. Today, the older women gen-

[continued p. 14-B, first paragraph]

TRANSPORTATION

●481 By Land. The *Boruca*, as is true of all the Indians of Costa Rica, are great walkers, climbing up and down the sharp spurs and steep mountains of their native habitat. Their main community, as we have seen, is situated in a series of undulating hills, which in itself is not easy country for a horse or a mule. The 492 ox is what one might rightly call the only beast of burden common to these people. A number of families own an ox which is used

[continued p. 14-B, fourth paragraph]

*Lehmann, 1910, vol. I, p. 198.

4:Pittier de Fabrega B-5 (ca. 1900) 1903
SA19 Talamanca SA19

539 Brinka to his presence, and told him he could go, and to be careful not to wound hogs again without killing them. He also marked in his presence all the hogs he would be at liberty to kill. And the man went away through the woods, until he got to Krámra-ua,[1] where he met with a few of his kinsmen who were hunting hogs. When they saw the man who used to cure them, the hogs always ran to him, and never would go away, so that he could easily kill all those which had been marked for him. And he always advised his companions never to wound animals, but to kill them right away.

VII. DON PEDRO CASCANTE.

(Legend of the hollow trail of El Pito.[2])

487 773 In very remote times, when the Spaniards had not yet arrived in these countries, the Indians only could climb up from the coast of Quepos to the high mountains of Dota by following the long and [481] tiresome ridge of El Pito, bound together by means of the royal vine into files of ten to twenty, and pulled by witchcraft without any effort from their side. But, also, on each journey one man disappeared without the others being aware when or how, and that was the toll they paid for the dreaded ascent.

539 This great calamity had lasted for numberless years, and the trail to El Pito became deeper and narrower from day to day, on account of the way they had to go over it, bound together in long files, when a very holy missionary father left Cartago, riding a strong white mule, to go and win over the Indians. And as he was going down to the coast through the fearful road of El Pito, he met the "Encanto" which had taken the form of a big turkey, and would not get out of the road to let the holy man pass. Then the father became very angry; he alighted from his mule, bound the turkey with a blessed string, and dragged him down hill until they got to the place called "Alto de los Cotos." There he tied him to a large tree which he blessed, and told him that he would stay there up to the day of the final doom. And from that day hence, the "Encanto" never again annoyed the passers-by.

Only a certain Pedro Cascante, who had a large breeding-farm of mules and cattle, down on the plain of "El Calicanto," allowed himself to become a prey to his avarice, and on account of it, he lost his soul.

Cascante had become very rich by carrying out to San Marcos the

[103]

[1] Krámra-ua, name of a place on the lower Diquís.

[2] This trail, so deeply cut into the ridge of El Pito as to be tunnel-like at a few places, leads from San Marcos, once one of the principal residences of the Quepos Indians, down to the coastal plains of the Pacific.

291 a cheap cotton cloth which is bought from
[A39] the nearest trading post or commissary and made into a Mother Hubbard. Short skirts and blouses are occasionally seen, particularly on the Pacific side. Some of the older Bribri women in upper Talamanca weave brown and white striped skirts from cotton (*see* Manufactures).[81] The art of weaving is said to have
286 been learned from the Borucas. The Bribri
177 do not know the single-weft technique, however.[82]

291 A man's clothing is generally a pair of trousers and a shirt. A belt can be a piece of vine, string, bark cloth, or brown and white
[184] striped cotton woven by the men. Except on the Pacific side, leather belts are almost never worn. Sandals are unknown, and shoes are rare in the region of Talamanca but are more common on the Pacific slope.

302 Adornment. Women's hair is long (figs. 9, *d*; 10, *b–c*) and usually parted in the center,
[184] braided, and rolled into a bun. Only at Salitre and Ujarrás does one see short and curled hair
[301] on the younger women. Flowers, ribbons, cheap barrettes and combs, often as many as six or seven, are favorite adornments for the head (fig. 9, *a–c*). Although men have short hair, there is a tendency to allow it to grow longer than is customary among non-Indians, particularly the forelocks which are combed straight back or hang on the face untouched (fig. 10, *a, d*).

Face painting seems to have been practised on the Caribbean side as late as the eighteen seventies. Gabb calls attention to it in Talamanca [83] and the then Bishop of Costa Rica, Bernardo A. Thiel, mentions some women and children whom he saw in Chirripó and states: " . . . They had two horizontal black bands

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 20(B)--ANALYST]

TRANSPORTATION

481 By Land. The most common method of transportation is by foot. The Talamancans are expert walkers on steep, rocky trails, some of which lead through tunnels of matted forest

[TEXT CONTINUES BOTTOM OF P. 20(B)--ANALYST]

[81] Compare this with Gabb, 1875, pp. 517–18.
[82] Stone, 1949, pp. 16–17.
[83] Gabb, 1875, p. 519.

302 (painted) below the eyes and on the cheeks. . . ." [84] In the 20th century, there is no trace [178] of paint in the Caribbean region. On the [177] Pacific side, a few women copy non-Indians by putting *achiote* on their cheeks in place of rouge and using lipstick which they buy. [751] Cocoa butter is applied occasionally as a protection against the sun.

292 In upper Talamanca and upper Chirripó on festive occasions, during short periods of group [476] work in building a house, clearing forests, hauling logs for a clan grave, etc., men still wear [231] headdresses made of white feathers and of macaw and eagle feathers (*see* Reunions).

301 Formerly the *usegLa* (*see* Social Organization) wore necklaces of jaguar teeth. Today, [825] boys use these necklaces "to get them used to hunting and take away fear of the jaguar." Beads made from sea shells are mixed with these teeth (fig. 12, *c*). The long all-shell [178] strings, called *chaquira* and mentioned in Spanish reports,[85] are not known now. Chil- [777] dren have a "good luck" necklace called *sewivu* in Cabécar. This is made from the bark [824] of a tree called *kuri* which is claimed to be immune to disease and to propagate of its own [237] accord. Sea shells, seeds (occasionally carved), bones, and jaguar, monkey, or alligator teeth are strung on it (*see* Manufacture). When [439] financially possible, women wear strands of red beads which are bought in trading posts or commissaries. There are no earrings in the remote sections.

301 On the Pacific side, the "good luck" neck- 184 laces of children have fewer or no teeth and [777] often a Roman Catholic charm or cross is worn. Here women wear earrings and single [439] strands of glass beads bought from traveling merchants.

TRANSPORTATION

● 481 roots. They are also adept at crossing swift boulder-filled rivers on foot. Their only aid when traveling is a long staff which they cut for this purpose before undertaking a journey.

[84] Fernández, 1883, vol. III, fn. 10, p. 338.
[85] Fernández, 1882, vol. II, p. 152.

* 539 warns when it is going to rain by howling in the morning and in the afternoon.
825
[821]

(17) Why the Cuyeo[202] Has a Tightly Closed Beak[203]

(Bribri)

Once *sibu* became ill and he sent the *cuyeo* to find out if he would get well. The bird took it upon himself to consult no one but to tell *sibu* that the answer was he would die. As a punishment for this, he, *sibu*, pressed the cuyeo's beak tightly shut.

RECREATION

574 of food and drink will be offered them. Con-
484 versation, in this case, is confined almost en-
[521] tirely to the men or if there are women with the travelers, they speak separately with the women of the household.

517 Hunting and fishing may in a sense be classed
224 as recreation for the men as well as part of
226 their livelihood. Here again, except in the rare instances of community use of fish poisons, it is a family matter.

296 Women and young girls of the same family,
252 particularly among the Bribri, are fond of gathering at the side of a stream to wash
● [481] clothes and grind foodstuffs. They swim and
[533] sing, praising in their songs the virtues of their
[574] respective swains (*see* Songs). This is the closest these people come to what might be termed a normal visit.

195 Cursing is not usual. The worst phrase a Bribri can use against another is:

bé	*rɔr*	*webLa*	*suLue*	*es*	*béus*	*bəmitsɛn.*
you	are	man	bad	like	devil	take (carry off).

The really unpleasant word here is *suLue* which means bad or ugly and is applied as a curse. A milder term is *bikési* which means useless, lazy, or coward. In Cabécar, however, the equivalent of this is *səkəɲé* which is a very strong term.

496 **Reunions.** Reunions, although pre-Columbian
574
273

[202] *See* Linguistic Texts: *lipo* (coyeo).